MARVEL
SPIDER-MAN
and the
Fantastic Four
SILVER RAGE
JEFF PARKER • MIKE WIERINGO

SPIDER-MAN and the Fantastic Four

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KESEL
12-20-06
PETE

A brilliant scientist--his best friend--the woman he loves--and her fiery-tempered kid brother! Together, they braved the terrors of outer space, and were changed by cosmic rays into something more than human! MR. FANTASTIC! THE THING! INVISIBLE GIRL! THE HUMAN TORCH! Now they are known simply as the:
Fantastic Four
While attending a demonstration in radiology, high school student PETER PARKER was bitten by a spider which had accidentally been exposed to RADIOACTIVE RAYS. Through a miracle of science, Peter soon found that he had GAINED the arachnid's proportionate strength and power…He had become:
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
CHAPTER 1

"SO YA WENNUP INNA FLYIN' SAUCER?"
OH YEAH! ALMOST 20 YEARS AGO TO THE DAY.
PROBED ME UP REAL GOOD, TOO!
SO HOW DID YA GET THE CHOMPS?
I WAS HEARIN' ALL KINDS OF WEIRD FREQUENCIES-- 'CAUSE THEY WERE TRACKIN' ME!
SO I GOT ALL THESE PULLED AND REPLACED WITH KRUGERRANDS I MELTED DOWN. I'M M'OWN BANK!
NICE. SO WE'D LIKE TO MAKE A WITHDRAWAL.
--WHUG? THTOP! AY!
HOLD 'IM STILL!
PARDON ME...

---ARE YOU LICENSED DENTAL PRACTITIONERS WITH THE STATE OF NEW YORK?
AAHHHH!
THOUGHT NOT.
AND SIR---
thwip
thwip
---YOU MIGHT WANT TO CUT BACK ON FLASHING THAT GRILL OF YOURS AROUND TOWN.
I'M JUST SAYING.
IT WAS ALL FOR NOTHIN' ANYWAY.
NOTHIN'.
THEY FOUND ME ANYWAYS.

HOO BOY.
I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE TURNED IN EARLY TONIGHT.
THE ARRIVAL

HEY, WHERE YOU GOING, SPACEMAN? I AIN'T GOOD ENOUGH TO PROBE ANYMORE?
BUDDY, GO SLEEP IT OFF!
HEY, HERALD OF DESTRUCTION, WAIT UP!
SILVER SURFER, RIGHT?
SAY, YOU KNOW WHERE THE SURFING'S REALLY GOOD?
ALPHA CENTAURI.
BECAUSE THE LAST TIME YOU SHOWED UP LIKE THIS, YOUR OLD BOSS GALACTUS THOUGHT OUR PLANET WAS DIM SUM!
COME ON, GUY, LET'S JUST HANG OUT AND--
YOW!
HELLO, WHAT'S THIS? THE SPIDER-MAN! YOU'RE BIG IN THE PLEIADES.
HUGE I TELL YOU!

WHO...?
IMPOSSIBLE MAN, GOOD SIR!
WAIT--YOU'RE THAT SPACE PEST THAT ALWAYS BUGS THE FANTASTIC FOUR...
...THE IMPROBABLE GUY.
SO EARTHMEN ARE LEARNING TO SWING BY SQUIRTING GOO NOW?
FINALLY THIS PLANET IS GETTING SOMEWHERE!
BUT THE TRUE TEST OF AGILITY IS A METEOR SHOWER.
POP
GAH!
STOP, YOU NUTCASE!
TOO MANY, I--
A WATER BALLOON?
Uh, STRUCTURED VAPOR, duhr. VERY SIMPLE.
POP
YOU JUST SHAPE ONE OF YOUR FINGERS INTO THE FORM OF A MOLECULAR COMBINER.
WELL, IF YOU'RE OF THE GALAXY'S MOST ADAPTABLE SPECIES, THE POPPUPIANS. AND I AM!
YOUR EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS SEEMS TO HAVE THROWN IN THE TOWEL SOON AFTER STANDING UPRIGHT!
Yeah, WELL AT LEAST WE DON'T DO JERKY THINGS LIKE MAKE PEOPLE THINK GALACTUS IS COMING.

DO YOU EVEN GET WHAT THAT MEANS?
POP
YOU BETTER BELIEVE I DO! HE CONSUMED MY HOME-WORLD...AND HAD OUR MOON FOR DESSERT.
Oh...Uh... SORRY.
FOR WHAT? I WAS ELSEWHERE, AND AS LONG AS ONE OF MY SPECIES LIVES, WE ALL LIVE.
EACH OF US CONTAINS THE ENTIRETY OF OUR POPULATION IN OUR DNA.
Note to self: Bring entire race back.
YOU'RE ALL SO INEFFICIENT!
SEE, LOOK-- YOU NEED TWO GENDERS ENGAGING IN COPULATION TO REPLICATE YOURSELVES.
Uh...
AND, LOOK--IF HIS ATTEMPTS SUCCEED, IT WILL TAKE HER NINE MONTHS OF GESTATION TO PRODUCE AN OFFSPRING.
POP
Oh MY GOD! GOOD NIGHT.
Naw BABY, WAIT!
THANKS A LOT, SPIDER-MAN! YA MENACE!
WELL, IF WE'RE SO LAME, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
THERE'S JUST SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PLANET-- YOU INTRIGUE ME.
AND I CAME TO IMPART A WARNING TO MY DEAR FRIENDS THE FANTASTIC FOUR...
Hmm...I WAS SURE THEIR BUILDING WAS RIGHT AROUND HERE.

POP
IT'S TWENTY BLOCKS THAT WAY.
AH, SO I SEE. THEY WILL BE SO HAPPY TO SEE ME!
NOT AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT THEY WON'T. BESIDES, THEY'RE THE F-F...
"...THEY'RE PROBABLY OUT STOPPING THE NEGATIVE ZONE FROM IMPLODING, OR KEEPING SEA PEOPLE FROM ATTACKING THE SURFACE WORLD.
"EITHER WAY, THEY'RE TOO BUSY TO PUT UP WITH SOME GALACTIC PEST."
WELL, YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY AN EARTH HERO--YOU WEAR A SILLY COSTUME AND DO ODD THINGS.
I SUPPOSE I CAN JUST TELL YOU MY NEWS.
POP
HEY, THAT LOOK IS TRADE-MARKED!
YA GOTTA PAY TEN BUCKS IF YOU'RE GONNA DO THAT!

thwap
HOW DO YOU MAKE THAT GOO, LIKE THIS?
ACTUALLY, IT'S MORE A "THWIP." ARRGH...
LOOK LITTLE GUY--WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR?
Oh, YES... SORRY. I LOSE FOCUS EASILY.
THAT'S WHY I TOOK THE FORM OF THE HERALD, TO REMIND MYSELF.
I WANTED TO MAKE SURE I DIDN'T FORGET TO TELL YOUR PLANET...
...ABOUT THAT.
I THOUGHT MISTER FANTASTIC MIGHT BE ABLE TO HIDE THE PLANET OR SOMETHING. ONCE IT LANDS YOU CAN SAY GOODBYE TO THIS YOUR WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT.
JEEZ! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME THIS EARLIER?!
thwip

YOU'LL FAIL TO STOP IT, BUT I CAN AT LEAST OFFER YOU TRANSPORT.
HOP IN!
AW, NO...
BEEED BEEEP
AAAAH! WHERE'D YOU LEARN TO DRIVE, YA NUT?
DRIVE?
TURN INTO SOMETHING ELSE! UP HIGH!
HONNNNNNK
POP
HMM. NOW THIS IS KINDA COOL.
IT'S LANDING IN CENTRAL PARK!
=SKZZT= ROGER THAT, HOUSTON. ENGAGING PURSUIT OF BOGEY, OVER.

SOMETHING'S GETTING OUT-- WHAT IS IT?
I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT YOUR PLANET'S NEW MASTERS---
---BUT I THINK THAT FELLOW IS CALLED *THE IMPERATOR*.

POP
Oh GOOD! SOME WEIRDOS ARE HERE, THEY'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!
Uh... THANKS.
Ahem EXCUSE ME... WE HAVE SOME REGULATIONS HERE ABOUT SETTING UP BIG EQUIPMENT THAT MIGHT DESTROY OUR PLANET.
BOOP
MAH-NEK TI---EOPLE OF PLANET THREE--EARTH. YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN AS THE THIRTEEN-THOUSANDTH, SEVEN-HUNDREDTH AND FORTY-THIRD HOST OF THE RACE KNOWN AS H'MOJEN.
THIS GREAT HONOR HAS BEEN AWARDED YOU BASED UPON EONS OF CLOSE OBSERVATION. YOUR POPULACE AND OURS WILL MERGE INTO ONE GREAT CONGLOMERATION OF BENGS THAT WILL INFLUENCE THE UNIVERSE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.
THAT'S WHAT I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU.
OKAY... DON'T SEE ANYONE ELSE FLYING IN WITH RAYGUNS AND BOMBS TO STOP THIS...
...ANYONE?
SIGH
FINE.

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO IMPOUND THIS CONQUER-BALL, SIR.
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SPOOKILY SILENT.
IS THAT YOUR PEOPLE'S VERSION OF A WHITE FLAG?
'CAUSE I'LL ACCEPT THA--
BOOOM
WHRONNK
WHUNGH
$2.00 FIRST 1/4 MILE
.30¢ EACH ADDITIONAL
$6.50 BAXTER BUILDING FLAT FARE

HEY!!! THAT'S MY NEW FRIEND! YOU CAN'T DO THAT!
HAH! I, SIR, AM A POPPUPIAN!
BLASTING ME IS AN EXERCISE IN--
ZZAAATT
--FUTIL-I-TY--IT-Y--
I'M AFRAID--
--YOU HAVE PUSHED ME TOO FAR, SIR!
POP
FWASHH
MORE FORMIDABLE THAN MOST PROTESTERS...

...A WARNING REPELLER WILL NOT SUFFICE.
NNNAAAAAHH!
--I CAN'T--
--BE DUS--
--TROEEEEEEE...
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
BEEP BEEP BEEP

Later.
=EHHHAAAH= Oh COOL.
CAN'T WAIT TO SEE BEN AT BREAKFAST.
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
7:00
BET HE DIDN'T LIKE HAVING ALL THE SUPPORTS IN HIS BED ALMOST MELTED. Heh.
WISH I COULD HAVE BEEN IN THE ROOM TO WATCH WHEN HE SAT--
DOWWWWWWNNN!
MORNING, PUNK.
BEN!

HEY, MOUNT JERKMORE! YOU MADE ME BURN UP MY FAVORITE PAJAMAS!
Aw, I'M SORRY, KID. MAYBE YA SHOULDN'T BE SUCH A SOUND SLEEPER.
COME IN AND HAVE SOME PANCAKES.
DON'T TRY TO--Ooh, PANCAKES.
LIVE IT UP, WE'LL BE EATIN' BRAN ALLA TIME ONCE SUZIE'S BACK.
BAXTER ACCESS; AUTHORIZED GUEST 4317--ARRIVING ON ELEVATOR FIVE.
SPIDEY!
WHAT THE HECK HAPPENED TA YOU?
SILVER GUYS--WANT TO TAKE OVER WORLD--
--MADE US WATCH A VIDEO-- Uhh---
---NEED YOUR BOSS---

BUG ALL GONE--!
Aw.
HOLD ON, KIDS...
...I'LL TURN THE TREE TRUNK INVISIBLE.
THERE.
COOL!
SEE, THERE ARE MANY MORE TYPES OF LIFE THAN YOU WOULD GUESS FROM LOOKING AT THE SURFACE.
WHAT'S THAT, BEN? IN CENTRAL PARK?
DID THE E.T. ALERTS NOT GO OFF? Wha--WHY WERE THEY TURNED DOWN?
Ummm...SO JOHNNY WOULDN'T WAKE UP--NEVER MIND THAT!
WE'RE ALMOST THERE--NAW, WE LEFT SPIDEY BACK TO REST. HE'D BEEN THROUGH THE RINGER. BUT WORSE, HE SAID--
BUT THAT'S... IMPOSSIBLE.
RIGHT, WE'RE ON OUR WAY.

ALL RIGHT! THE F.F. ARE HERE!
THEY SAY THEY'RE TAKIN' OVER THE PLANET, MISTER GRIMM!
DON'T WORRY, WE'LL SHOW 'EM THE DOOR.
Yeah! SEND THIS FOOL PACKING!
GO GET 'EM, TORCH!
YOU KNOW IT!
FIRST, WE'LL MELT THAT BIG WHIFFLEBALL AND STOP WHATEVER IT'S DOING.
Huh.
THE GENETIC COLLUDER HAS FUNCTIONED IN LAVA OCEANS BEFORE. IT CANNOT BE MELTED OR COMPROMISED.
WELL, HECK. IF THE THING'S THAT TOUGH...
...THEN IT'LL MAKE A GOOD MISSILE!
PUNT

YEAHH!
GO, GUYS, GO!
WOO HOO!
Uh--- THAT'S GOING TO LAND ON US---
I'M ON IT.
BACK UP, FOLKS. THE KID'S GOING INTO OVERDRIVE!
ZHOOOSHH

READY TO CALL IT A DAY? BECAUSE WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED.
THE PROBES DID NOT DETECT SO MANY VARIANT HUMANS. THE H'MOJEN WILL HAVE TO ASSESS THIS SITUATION.
UFFF!
AHHHH!
--DON'T LIKE THAT THING, WHATEVER IT WAS---
TAKE A POWDER, KID, BENJY'S GONNA HANDLE HIM.
I AM ALREADY BEHIND SCHEDULE, AND THIS WILL SLOW OVERALL PROGRESS.
Oh YEAH, THAT REMINDS ME. IT'S HALF PAST--

--CLOBBERIN' TIME!
Oh YEAH, THAT REMINDS ME. IT'S HALF PAST--
Huh?
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO REPEL EVERY INTERFERENCE. ALL MACHINERY WILL NOW GENERATE A TWO-SECOND CHRONAL DISPLACEMENT FIELD.
SO YER PEOPLE THINK THEY'RE GONNA INVADE THE EARTH AND WE'LL JUST WAVE 'EM THROUGH?

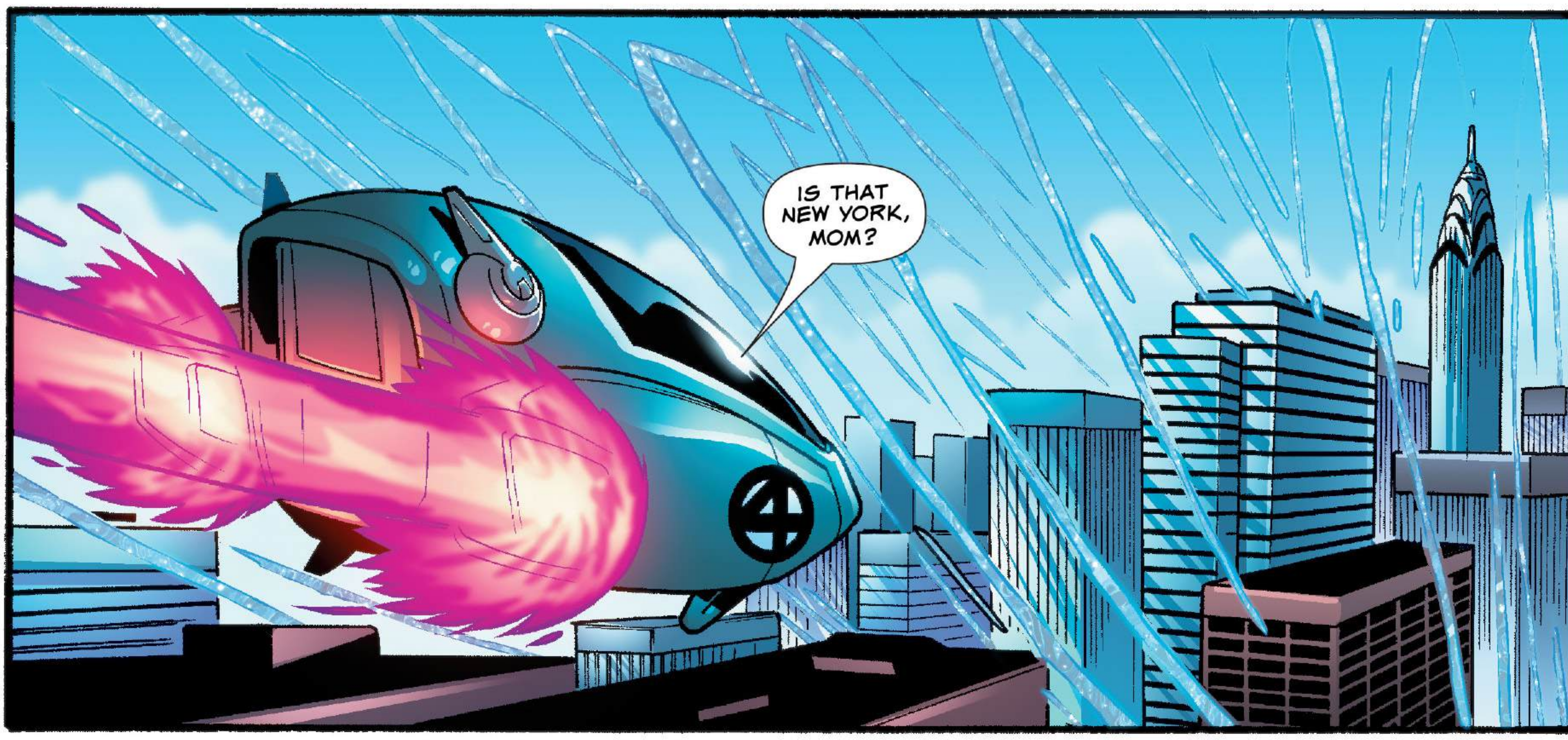
NOT MY PEOPLE. I SIMPLY WORK FOR THEM.
WHATEVER! THEY'RE NOT GETTIN' NEAR THIS PLANET!
TELL 'IM, BEN!
I DON'T THINK YOU COMPREHEND.
klik
THEY'RE ALREADY HERE.

2
RINGO!
KESEL
'07
PETE

PETER!
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THESE ALIENS IN CENTRAL PARK?
WHO DO YOU THINK WAS THE FIRST LUCKY GUY THEY SLAMMED INTO A CAB?
LOOK, MARY JANE, I HAVE TO CHANGE AND GET BACK OVER THERE-- THOUGH THE FF PROBABLY DON'T NEED MY HELP.
WHAT KIND OF JUNK IS THAT? OF COURSE THEY NEED YOU!
THANKS, SWEETIE. BUT YOU CALL ME WHEN A LIZARD IN A LAB COAT IS BOTHERING YOU, NOT WHEN INTERPLANETARY WAR IS BREWING.
THEY'RE THE BIG GUNS AND I'M FINE WITH THAT. HEAVY HITTERS GET HIT HEAVILY.
YOU'RE NOT GOING OUT THERE UNLESS YOU EAT A LITTLE LUNCH.
REALLY AUNT MAY, I CAN'T! I HAVE TO--
--WELL, MAYBE A SANDWICH I CAN TAKE.
IT MIGHT MAKE MY STOMACH SETTLE DOWN. I'VE FELT WEIRD SINCE I WOKE UP.
PETER...

---DO NOT FIGHT THE PROCESS! THIS IS GOING TO MAKE OUR WORLD A BETTER PLACE.
GAH!
LISTEN TO HER, PETER!
IT'S MAY-H'OLL, PLEASE. THIS IS A GREAT TIME IN OUR WORLD'S HISTORY AND YOU BETTER NOT MEDDLE WITH IT!
AUNT MAY! STOP IT, EVERYBODY!
WHY HAVEN'T YOU CHANGED YET? MAYBE YOU SHOULD LIE DOWN UNTIL IT TAKES EFFECT--
NO, MJ, THIS IS ALL WRONG! THEY'RE TAKING US OVER!
THERE'S NO "THEY", IT'S US! WE'RE ONE PEOPLE. WE JUST DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE INCOMPLETE.
YOU'LL UNDERSTAND, WHEN IT HAPPENS TO YOU.
BUT IF YOU'RE GOING TO WORK AGAINST US, DON'T COME BACK HOME.
Oh, THIS JUST GETS BETTER AND BETTER.

CHAPTER 2



I'M NOT READING ANY DESTRUCTIVE ENERGY. THE EPICENTER IS IN CENTRAL PARK.
IT'S LIKE FIREWORKS!
PIT-TY!
FANTASTICAR, ACTIVATE AUTOPILOT.
KIDS, WE'VE CALLED ALICIA, SHE'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU AT HOME.
LEESHA!
YOU CAN WATCH ONE CARTOON, AND WE'LL BE HOME AS SOON AS WE CAN. LOVE YOU.
TWO CARTOONS!
ONE!

THERE'S SOME KIND OF SPACESHIP, BUT IT LOOKS DAMAGED.
THAT CROWD DOWN THERE---
THE ALIEN FORCE IS ALREADY HERE!
AND THEY'RE ALL OVER BEN!
BACK OFF! BACK OFF!

GET OFF OF HIM!
SUE! HOLD ON, WAIT---
STRANGE, THEY DON'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY ADVANCED WEAPONRY.
REED, GO EASY! DON'T HURT 'EM!
Um---
---IS SOMETHING A LITTLE BACKWARDS HERE?
WOULD YOU LIKE US TO LET THE ALIENS PUMMEL YOU? OR DO YOU WANT ME TO PUT UP A FORCE FIELD?
NO, SEE-- IT'S--THESE AREN'T ALIENS, SIS!
THESE ARE OURS.
EARTH PEOPLE.

STOP ATTACKING THE IMPERATOR!
THIS IS THE DESTINY OF THE HUMAN AND H'MOJ RACES!
WHAT---?
AWAIT THE CHANGE!
POLICE
IS IT A VIRUS?
NO. SEE THAT SILVER STREAK RIGHT THERE?
AHH--!
BIPEDAL. Ooh, FIVE-DIGIT APPENDAGES.
INCREDIBLE.
YOU CAN'T BREAK THE MACHINE INITIATING THIS PROCESS?
IT WOULDN'T MELT OR ANYTHING. BEN HAD MORE LUCK WITH THE SPACESHIP---

...BUT HE'S ALMOST GOT IT PUT BACK TOGETHER.
YOU COULDN'T AFFECT HIM EITHER?
NOPE. WATCH.
BEN, THAT'S CITY PROPERTY!
DON'T WORRY...
...IT COMES RIGHT BACK.
Oh.
VERY EFFECTIVE!

HE MUST HAVE A CHRONAL DISPLACEMENT FIELD OF ABOUT TWO SECONDS IN EFFECT!
2.37779 SECONDS, ACTUALLY.
THE SPHERICAL DEVICE; IT'S GRAFTING YOUR PEOPLE ONTO HUMANS?
NOT *MY* PEOPLE, I JUST WORK FOR THEM.
A BROADCAST IS GOING THROUGH YOUR TELECOM SYSTEMS NOW EXPLAINING THE PROCESS.
Hey, REED, SEE IF HE WANTS TO GO WITH US TO THAT NEW PHO PLACE, AFTER HE'S DONE TAKIN' OVER THE PLANET.
IS IT TRUE THAT THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN WAS KILLED?
THAT'S WHAT SPIDEY SAID, BUT WE DIDN'T SEE ANY TRACE OF HIM--
--AND ALL OUR WITNESSES ARE GOING SILVER AND THROWING---
---ROCKS---
---ARE THERE ALWAYS PLANTS LIKE THIS IN THE PARK?
NO.

WHAT'S THE NEWS, STRETCH?
WE'RE IN BIG TROUBLE. WE NEED TO GET BACK TO MY LAB.
Yeah, WE DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE IN TROUBLE UNTIL YOU GOT HERE, THANKS-- --OW!
COMING THROUGH...PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME USE REAL FORCE!
THE ALIENS ARE GRAFTING ONTO OUR RACE IN A LENGTHENING RADIUS. WE'LL SOON BE OVERWHELMED BY THEIR NUMBERS.
LIKE THAT?
Hey, GET OFF OUR CAR!
DESTROY THEIR EQUIPMENT!
ACCEPT THE CHANGE OR LEAVE!
YOU HEARD THE BURNING MAN, FOLKS.

THANK YOU FOR RIDING THE WEB-LINE.
PLEASE KEEP YOUR HANDS OUTSIDE THE VEHICLE. UNLESS YOU ARE CONTINUING ON TO BAXTER POINT, PLEASE DEPART NOW.
YAHH!
OOOMP!
THANKS, BUG. YA LOOK BETTER.
DON'T WORRY, I STILL FEEL AWFUL.
WHAT'S THE PLAN?
I'M AFRAID IT'S RETREAT AND ASSESS THE SITUATION.
RETREAT IS THE NEW "WIN." GOT IT.
THIS ISN'T SOME BLUSTERING VILLAIN WHO HAS TO YELL AND ASSERT HIMSELF, THESE INVADERS CLEARLY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING.
EXACTLY. HE DOESN'T MIND TALKING ABOUT IT BECAUSE WE'RE NO THREAT. THIS IS THE WAY GALACTUS WAS WHEN HE FIRST CAME TO EARTH.
MAN, I'D KILL FOR SOME GALACTUS ABOUT NOW.
Yeah... KIND OF HARD TO FIGHT OUR OWN FRIENDS AND FAMILY.
THE CHILDREN!

ALICIA!
SPIDER-MAN, HURRY TO THE BAXTER BUILDING!
YES, MA'AM!
I CAN'T CALL THEM! EVERY FREQUENCY HAS BEEN COMMANDEERED.
BROADWAY WOULDA BEEN FASTER!
BACKSEAT DRIVER.
HURRY, REED!
BAY ACCESS-- OPEN!
ALICIA! KIDS! ARE...
...ARE YOU...
...OKAY. Whew.
WE'RE FINE, REED. I'VE HEARD THE BROADCASTS ON EVERY CHANNEL. I GUESS THE ALIENS AREN'T INTERESTED IN CHILDREN...
...OR THE BLIND.

GIVE ME A KISS!
Hey, SPIDER-MAN!
YA KNOW...THESE ALIENS CAN'T BE SO SMART IF THEY'D PASS UP A CHANCE TO BE ALICIA MASTERS.
THANK YOU, BEN.
THE ALIEN IN CENTRAL PARK MENTIONED A BROADCAST.
YOU CAN'T MISS IT ON ANY TV OR RADIO.
HELLO. I'M DAVID SCHMIDT-S'ORR, GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK AND ELDER COUNCILOR OF THE H'MOJ CIVILIZATION.
WOW, SWEET WIDESCREEN.
Yeah!
Shh.
YOUR PLANET HAS BEEN PICKED OUT OF A POSSIBLE 7,344 CANDIDATES TO BE THE LATEST HOST FOR THE H'MOJ-KELLUSAR RACE.
THERE ARE JUST OVER FOUR BILLION ENTITIES AT ANY TIME THAT WILL MERGE WITH APPROPRIATE HOSTS. ONCE EARTH'S POPULACE PASSED FIVE BILLION, IT ALLOWED US A PERCENTAGE BUFFER TO INSURE OPTIMUM ALIGNMENT OF PERSONALITIES.
YOU MAY FEAR THIS PROCESS, SO WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPLAIN, AND ASK THAT YOU NOT IMPEDE FELLOW CITIZENS WHO BECOME MERGED. WE STRIVE FOR PEACEFUL ASSIMILATION.
YAWN.
JOHNNY STORM...

OUR PEOPLE ARE A SYMBIOTIC SPECIES WHOSE BIOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO LOCATE OTHER SUCCESSFUL LIFE-FORMS THAT OCCUPY A SIGNIFICANT NICHE AND FORM A BOND.
THOUGH NOT THE MOST POWERFUL SPECIES, YOU ARE EXTREMELY INFLUENTIAL IN THE DYNAMICS OF INTERGALACTIC CULTURES.
AS A MERGED PEOPLE, YOU WILL EXPERIENCE THE THRILL OF SHARING YOUR SYMBIOTE'S PAST AND KNOWLEDGE! YET WE'LL HAVE NO FURTHER PROBLEMS WITH DISCRIMINATION BASED UPON APPEARANCE.
MUCH OF THE WORK INVOLVED WITH THE RESETTLEMENT IS DUE TO THE EFFORTS OF THE IMPERATOR. HE SENDS DRONES ACROSS THE GALAXY TO FIND SUITABLE HOMES, AND THEN INITIATES THE MERGING AS EFFICIENTLY AND QUICKLY AS H'MOJENLY POSSIBLE.
THOSE NOT USEFUL DUE TO PHYSICAL OR MENTAL CAPACITY WILL BE RELOCATED TO A YET-UNDETERMINED LOCALE WHERE THEY WILL HAVE MINIMUM INTERACTION WITH THE NEW MERGED RACE. THIS DIASPORA IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY--NORTH AMERICA IS NEARLY COMPLETE!
THIS IS A GREAT MOMENT IN THE HISTORY OF BOTH OUR PEOPLE--YOUR NEW SILVER AGE!

OKAY, HOW COME NONE OF US HAVE CHANGED?
YOU HEARD THE PART ABOUT MENTAL CAPACITY, RIGHT?
I'M GUESSING THAT IF ONE'S DNA IS SUFFICIENTLY DIFFERENT, THE PROCESS DOESN'T WORK EITHER, WHICH IS WHY WE'RE THE SAME.
Hmmm. GUESS YOU TWO ARE GOING TO GROW UP MORE SPECIAL THAN I THOUGHT.
I'M GOING TO BE OF MOST USE IN MY LAB.
BEN, LET'S GET BACK TO THE PARK AND TRY SOME MORE ATTACKS.
FINE WITH ME.
WHY DON'T YOU TWO WORK TOGETHER AND SEE IF YOU CAN FIND ANY SUPERHUMANS HAVING SOME SUCCESS?
YOU *REALLY DO* HATE ME.

GONNG
THIS IS TOTALLY GOING TO BE THE ANSWER.
Ha! WE'RE GOING TO SOLVE IT ALL JUST BY GOING TO GREENWICH VILLAGE.
SURE. WHATEVER.
Hm. I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING. FLAME YOUR HEAD ON.
WELCOME TO THE SILVER SANCTORUM, GENTLEMEN.
I ASSUME YOU HAVE MERGED WITH THE H'MOJ?
Uh...
Yeah, I JUST HAVE TO... KEEP BURNING NOW, THE MERGE MADE ME SO POWERFUL!
YOU CAN'T TELL BY MY MASK, BUT NOW I'M THE... SILVER SPIDER!
GREETINGS...
...FELLOW HEROES OF THE SILVER AGE. TO WHAT DO I, DOCTOR STRANGE, OWE THIS VISIT?
CRUD. THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
Oh...HI, DOC. WE WERE JUST IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. SO Um...
...HOW ARE YOU LIKING THE CHANGE?

MY COMBINED BEING MAKES ME AN EVEN GREATER MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!
STEADY YOUR NERVES AS I DEMONSTRATE---
---I WANT YOU TO THINK OF A CARD.
ALSO IN THE NEWS, THE SILVER SOCIETY IS COMING TOGETHER IN RECORD TIME, THANKS TO THE IMPERATOR!
SOME SNAGS ARE COMING FROM CITIZENS WITH MODIFIED DNA STRUCTURES---
---BUT MANY HEROES HAVE SUCCESSFULLY MADE THE CHANGE. IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THE UNMERGED WILL NOT BE TREATED LIKE CRIMINALS---
Sydney Weiss...NewsChan el Ten
10
---BUT THERE WILL BE REPERCUSSIONS FOR OBSTRUCTING COLONIZATION. WHICH NONETHELESS, IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY!

THE IMPERATOR IS NOW SENDING DISPERSAL UNITS AROUND THE WORLD TO ENSURE WHAT WE EXPECT TO BE THE MOST SUCCESSFUL MERGE YET!
WINK
MAKING THE COLONIZATION SPHERE INVISIBLE WILL NOT STOP THE PROCESS.
I HAVE DONE THIS MANY TIMES. I DO NOT NEED TO SEE IT.
NOR WILL MAKING THE LARGE STONE MAN INVISIBLE WORK. I STILL HAVE THE CHRONAL DISPLACEMENT FIELD IN EFFECT.
NUTS!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT.
I HAVE FIELDED ALMOST EVERY TYPE OF INTERFERENCE, FROM FAR MORE ADVANCED RACES THAN YOURSELVES. I ASSURE YOU, THIS IS FUTILE.

RRHHHH---
STOP! YOU CANNOT IMPEDE THE VITAESTREAMS!
IS THIS HOW YA ZAPPED SPIDEY AND THE POOR LITTLE GREEN IMP?
WELL, BEN GRIMM DON'T ZAP THAT EASY.
CAN'T--- IT'S TOO MUCH!
Whoa THERE!
MILLIONS OF LIFE FORCES ARE BEING ALIGNED WITH HOSTS. IT IS IMPRESSIVE YOU COULD CONTAIN THEM THAT LONG.
Gee THANKS, MR. CONQUEROR.
THIS PLANET'S RESISTANCE EXCEEDS MY PROJECTIONS.
FURTHER SAFEGUARDS MUST BE EMPLOYED.

THIS IS... NOT GOOD.
YOU FELLOWS HAVE ANY LUCK?
Uh-oh. IF YOU'RE ASKING IF WE HAD LUCK, WE'RE IN TROUBLE.
NONE OF THE NON-POWERED HEROES WE SAW ARE VERY CAPABLE ANYMORE.
DOCTOR STRANGE IS, LIKE, SUB-DAVID BLAINE NOW.
DAREDEVIL'S ALL BUMPING INTO THINGS...
POWERS DON'T SEEM TO BE MUCH MORE HELP.
WE BARELY SLOWED THE IMPERATOR DOWN.
THEN HE SHOT HIS MOUTH OFF ABOUT CALLIN' IN SOME BACK-UP, BUT IT JUST LOOKS LIKE HE WENT BACK TO WORK TO ME.
THE H'MOJ HAVE THEIR COLONIZATION PROCESS DOWN THOROUGHLY. IT'S HARD TO MOUNT A DEFENSE WHEN THEY CONVERT EVERYONE IN THE AREA TO THEMSELVES.

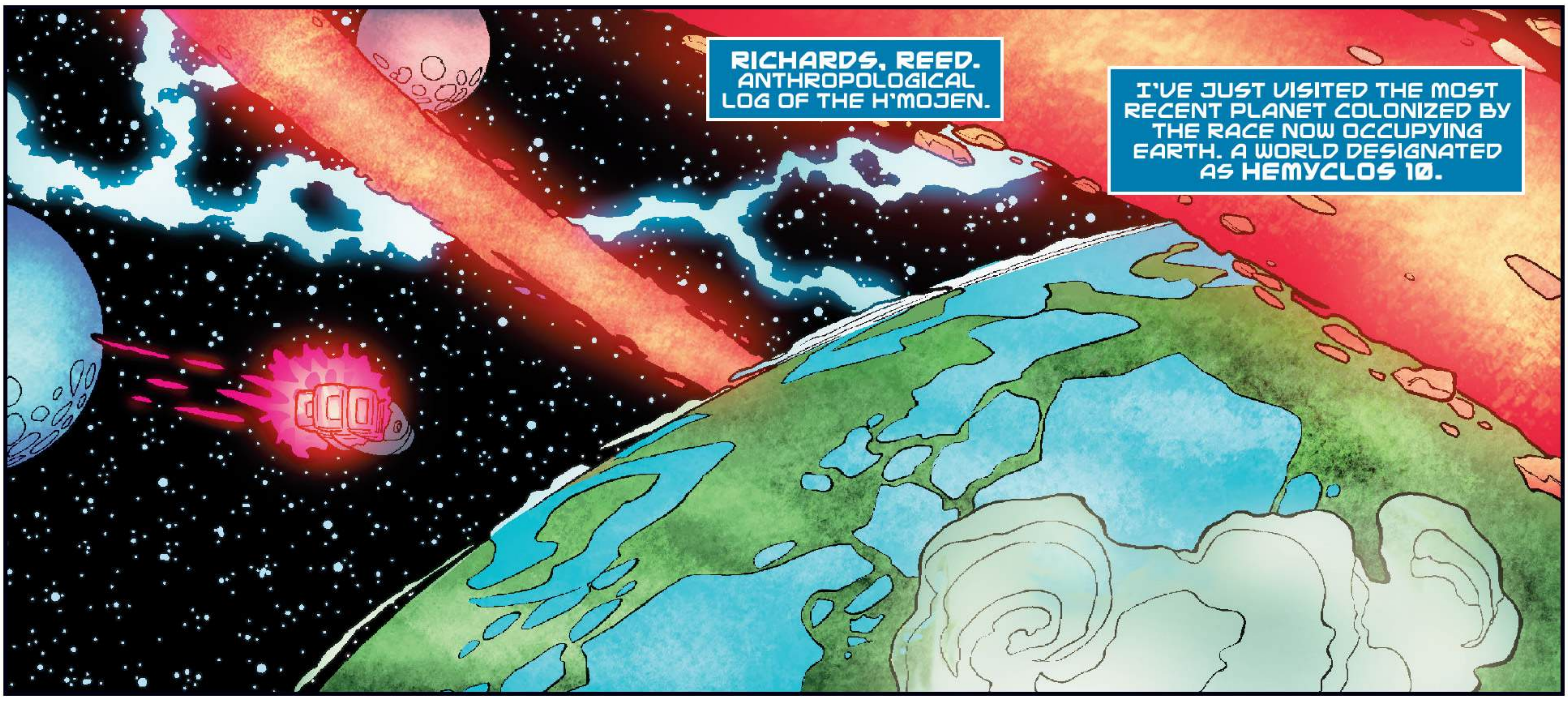
I'VE TRIED EVERY BIT OF TECHNOLOGY I HAVE, AND I'VE RUN MILLIONS OF SIMULATIONS. ANY WAY YOU TRY TO SEPARATE HOSTS AND PARASITES KILLS THEM BOTH.
BUT THEY EVENTUALLY LEAVE THEIR HOST SPECIES WHEN THEY INVADE A NEW PLANET, RIGHT? DO ALL THE PEOPLE DIE?
GOOD POINT. NO, ACCORDING TO THE HISTORY THEY'RE ADDING TO EARTH DATABASES, WHICH ALSO SHOWS ALL THE PLANETS THEY COLONIZED IN THE PAST.
I THINK VISITING SOME OF THE PLANETS TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THEY LEFT IS THE KEY TO THIS PROBLEM.
IT LOOKS LIKE EVEN THE CLOSEST ARE MILLIONS OF LIGHT-YEARS AWAY, THOUGH.
TRUE. BUT I DO HAVE A LITTLE PROJECT I FINISHED RECENTLY.
YOU'RE GONNA LOVE THIS, HOTHEAD.
Oh MAN...!
IT'S BUILT FOR HOPPING VAST REACHES OF SPACE. WARPS THROUGH BLACK HOLES, TESSERACTS, THE NEGATIVE ZONE, OF COURSE...
OF COURSE.
BUT THERE'S ONLY ROOM FOR ONE.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO EXPAND THE COCKPIT, AND I THINK YOU'RE ALL NEEDED HERE MORE THAN ME AT THE MOMENT.
YOU KNOW I WAS BORN TO FLY THIS.
"JOHNNY STORM" AND "FACT-FINDING MISSION" JUST DON'T EVER GET NEAR EACH OTHER IN MY HEAD SOMEHOW.
YOU'RE RIGHT. NOW GO.
IT'S JUST GOING TO GET TOUGHER EVERY MINUTE I HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT.
THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST COMPLEX THREATS WE--EARTH--HAS EVER FACED.
WE'RE NOT GOING TO BEAT IT WITH POWER AND STRENGTH.
FORTUNATELY, YOU HAVE ANOTHER SCIENCE NERD TO KEEP OUR NUMBER RIGHT WHILE I'M GONE.
WOW... UH, GOSH...
clik
I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
AW, HE SLAPPED THAT THING ON LOCKJAW THE LAST TIME SUSIE WENT OUTTA TOWN.

BE CAREFUL, BUDDY.
HE'LL BE BACK. WITH ANSWERS.
I'M NOT WORRIED. HE ALWAYS COMES THROUGH.
BUT THANKS, LITTLE BROTHER.
ATTENTION, FANTASTIC FOUR AND THE CRAWLING ONE.
YOU ARE GUILTY OF CONSPIRING AGAINST THE GREAT MERGING.
AS UNCHANGED HUMANS, YOU WOULD NORMALLY BE RELOCATED TO AN ABORIGINAL RESERVATION.
NOW WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE YOU INTO CUSTODY.
BUGS?
BIG BUGS.

3
RINGO!
KESEL
'07!
PETE

CHAPTER 3


RICHARDS, REED. ANTHROPOLOGICAL LOG OF THE H'MOJEN.
I'VE JUST VISITED THE MOST RECENT PLANET COLONIZED BY THE RACE NOW OCCUPYING EARTH. A WORLD DESIGNATED AS HEMYCLOS 10.

PRIOR TO THEIR ARRIVAL, HEMYCLOS 10 WAS A BUSTLING CENTER OF TRADE IN THIS ARM OF THE GALAXY. THEIR OWN DATABASES SHOW THAT THE VARIETY AND QUALITY OF THE PLANET'S GOODS WERE UNMATCHED IN ANY SURROUNDING SECTORS.
IN THE PAST HUNDRED YEARS, INTEREST WANED AND TRADE ROUTES SHIFTED. THIS CIVILIZATION THAT HELD SUCH SWAY AMONG ITS NEIGHBORING SYSTEMS HAS BECOME ALMOST COMPLETELY ISOLATED.
THE PEOPLE THERE ARE NOW TRYING TO RELEARN WHAT THEY LOST, AND HAD NO INFO THAT WOULD STOP THE COLONIZATION OF EARTH.
WILL THIS BE THE FUTURE OF EARTH?
WAKING UP SEVERAL GENERATIONS LATER TO A STAGNANT SOCIETY...DRAINED OF EVERYTHING THAT MADE IT SPECIAL?
OUR POPULATION BATTLES ITSELF OVER ITS DIFFERENCES, AND DOESN'T CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES OF EVERYONE BEING THE SAME.
"HEY...UM. THE ALIENS HAVE BUGS NOW."

BIG BUGS.
THE H'MOJEN WAY IS TO EMBRACE THE TECHNOLOGICAL LEVEL OF THE HOST PLANET...
...BUT WHEN YA INTERFERE LIKE YOU'RE DOIN', THE IMPERATOR CAN IMPLEMENT PROTECTIVE MEASURES.
LIKE THESE INSECTOIDS FROM OUR LAST HOME.
I MUST SUPERVISE THE SPHERE NOW OPERATING IN EURASIA, MAYOR. THE TRIAX KNOW WHAT TO DO.
I'M GOING TO SECURE THE BUILDING AND MAKE SURE ALICIA AND THE KIDS ARE SAFE. YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
Oh YES WE DO, SUZIE.

OKAY, CREEPS, LET'S SEE WHAT YOU GOT!
FINALLY, SOMETHIN' WE CAN HIT!
NOT... BAD.
Aw, I'VE ALREADY BUSTED MY "4".
ting
NO PROB. THAT'S JUST A TOY ONE THAT FRANKLIN WEARS ANYWAY.

FWOO
FWOO
FWOO
HEY!
YAK!
YOW!
SORRY, BEN, I GOTTA TURN UP THE THERMOSTAT!
Whew, IT'S LIKE BEING AT GRANDMA GRIMM'S!
THERE YA GO, TORCHY! IT'S GETTIN' SOLID---
---AND BUSTABLE!
NOW WE'LL SEE WHAT'S WHAT!

OOF!
BAF
HANG ON, BIG GUY!
thwip
thwip
I'VE GOT--
THUK
THUK
--YOOOOUUU!!
OOOGHH!
GREAT! NOW DROP ME RIGHT ON THAT GIANT YAHOO!
SKRUNCH

YEE-- --URRRR-- --AAAHH!!!
OH, YEAH!!!
BACK ATCHA, HANDSOME!
WHRUMPH
AND DOWN YA GO!
Oh NO YOU DON'T!
I'VE HAD ABOUT ENOUGH OF THAT SHOCK WAVE TAIL!
SSKRRRAAAHH!

NICE, JO--
WHOOOFF!!!
WHAT'S THIS?
FORGOT ABOUT YOU.
HKASK-KASK-KASK...
THE H'MOJEN ARE ALSO CONCENTRATING FORCES IN THE MOUNTAINS OF TRANSIA. WHAT COULD...
...OF COURSE!
NOW YOU KNOW HOW IT FEELS!
HOME OF THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY-- A SCIENTIST WHO EVOLVED ANIMALS TO HUMAN LEVELS AND HIMSELF TO NEAR-GOD STATUS.
THAT'S ENOUGH OUTTA YOU, C'MERE!
HOPE THIS END DOESN'T FIRE TOO...
HE'S RARELY AROUND, BUT HIS BEAST MEN MAY BE ABLE TO HELP.
HM. NO RESPONSE.
"THEN WE'LL TRY IN PERSON."
OOP! I'M GOIN' FOR A RIDE!
HANG ON, BEN, I'LL--

OW! --GET CARRIED OFF TOO!
WHERE DID THESE FIREPROOF ARMS COME FROM?
Oh, NO YOU DON'T! I JUST GOT THOSE TEAMMATES.
thwip
thwip
NOW A NICE, HEAVY ANCHOR...
GRYYAAAH!
HEY, Whoa, BOY...HOLD STILL!
MAN, I REALLY SHOULD HAVE STAYED IN BED...
!
!

EVERYBODY TRY TO STAY ON TOP!
YOW!
!
!
!
!
!
BA-BOOM
AND THIS IS THE SCENE JUST MINUTES AGO WHEN NEW YORK'S INSECTOID DEFENSE BROUGHT DOWN THE ANTI-MERGIST FACTION.
LET'S GO TO THE VIEW FROM SKY EYE NEWS 23!

IT LOOKS LIKE THE INSECTOIDS WILL NEED SOME TREATMENT, BUT THE INTERFERENCE HAS BEEN PUT DOWN!
AND THEY APPEAR TO BE RETREATING!
THANKS FOR THE RIDE, SIS.
OW! WHAT'S THIS?
SORRY, SPIDER-MAN. THAT'S VAL'S TODDLER SEAT. I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO TAKE IT OUT.
YA KNOW, SUZIE, WE WERE WINNING!
NO, BEN, YOU WERE BEATING SOME MONSTERS. THE H'MOJEN HAVE ALREADY WON...
WE'VE GOT TO TRY TO HELP THE REST OF THE PLANET NOW.
CAT
LOOK AT 'EM! CHEERIN' LIKE WE WERE THE RED SOX!
Ugh... I FEEL LIKE I'M GETTIN' THE FLU...
IT'S NOT THE NINTH INNING YET.
WE'RE GOING TO SEE SOME PEOPLE WHO KNOW A FEW THINGS ABOUT CHANGING SPECIES. NEXT STOP...
...WUNDAGORE MOUNTAIN.

THE EVOLUTIONARY? YEAH HE'S SMART, BUT HE CAN BE A *MAJOR* NUTJOB.
IF ANY PLACE ON THE PLANET HAS A SOLUTION TO THIS, BEN, IT'S THAT CITADEL.
AND THE KNIGHTS OF WUNDAGORE ARE THE PERSONIFICATION OF HONOR.
YA MEAN BEASTIFICATION.
THEY'RE UNDER ATTACK FROM A SILVER ARMY!
TAKE THE WHEEL, WEB-HEAD!
MAN, YOU GUYS JUST RECRUITED ME FOR DRIVING, DIDN'T YOU?
THEY'RE ON THE SOUTH WALL, TOO!
THE F-F-FANTASTIC FOUR! THINK YOU THEY MEAN TO HELP... US?
I SHOULD THINK SO.

INCOMING!
FLOOM
YOU MIGHT WANNA LAND WHILE YOU STILL HAVE A WORKIN' ENGINE, CHIEF!
BACK DOWN NOW AND I WON'T BURN YOUR CABLES IN HALF!
AHHH!!
THE HEAT!
GAAHH!!
HA! SHOW 'EM THE DOOR, BOYS!
WE HAVE THE ADVANTAGE! DRIVE THEM OUT!
WRETCHED SNEAK ATTACKERS! DIRECT COMBAT IS WHAT WE NEW MEN DO BEST!

HAD TO GET OUTTA THERE 'CAUSE A LITTLE SPIDER TELLS ME---
---THE OTHER SHOE IS ABOUT TO DROP.
AND BY SHOE I MEAN BOMBS.
I'VE GOT THIS!
KEEP THAT FORCE-FIELD UP, SIS---
CHOOM
---AND I'LL SEND THOSE BOMBERS PACKING!

AND STAY OUT!
HAD ANYONE LISTENED TO ME, WHICH YOU DID NOT, WE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED THIS.
MANY THANKS, SUSAN RICHARDS! HOW DIDST THOU KNOW OF THIS TREACHERY SO FAST?
DUMB LUCK, SIR KNIGHT. WE CAME TO SEE IF THE EQUIPMENT OF THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY COULD STOP THIS INVASION PROCESS.
I IMAGINE THE ALIENS FEARED THAT SAME THING.
M'LADY, OUR BENEFACTOR DID LEAVE BEHIND SOMETHING THAT MAY BE OF USE.
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE A SPIDER-MAN.
YEAH, BUT CHECK ME OUT!
NOW?
NO.
I BELIEVE THIS DEVICE OF HIS WAS BUILT TO MAINTAIN GENETIC INTEGRITY IN A POPULACE.
YET IT IS BEYOND EVEN OUR CAPACITY FOR THE SCIENCES.
NO PROBLEM.

ALL RIGHT, SPIDEY! DO YOUR SCIENCE THING.
Umm.
IS THIS THE ON BUTTON?
COME ON, THINK HARDER!
AGH! WHY DID REED HAVE TO GO INTO SPACE!
Aw, GIVE 'IM A BREAK. NO ONE EXPECTS YA TO BE STRETCHO-SMART, BUG.
ACTUALLY... I DO HAVE AN IDEA.
YES?
WHAT? WHAT IS IT?
...BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LIKE IT.
"NO. WAY."
"WHAT?"
"YER OFF THE TEAM!"
"I MEAN... WE'RE SO CLOSE TO HIS PLACE--"

SPIDER-MAN'S RIGHT, JOHNNY. WE CAN'T RULE OUT ANYONE'S HELP WHEN THE PLANET IS AT STAKE.
BUT HE'S TRIED TO KILL US!
HE DID GET ME KILLED!
WOW! IT LOOKS LIKE THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS ON THE RUN!
BUT FROM WHAT?
NO NO!!!
FLEE!
AHHH!!!
TRAITORS!
TOO WEAK-WILLED TO RESIST MERE GALACTIC PARASITES? YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE CALLED LATVERIANS!
RUN, DOGS!!!

VON DOOM! WE'RE HERE TO--
THE FOUR!
WRETCHED CURS!
ATTACKING WHEN YOU KNOW EVERY BIT OF MY PSYCHIC ENERGY WOULD BE DEVOTED TO KEEPING MY FORM INTACT!
CLEARLY A RICHARDS PLAN!
YA SEE?
ZZWAK
KNOCK IT OFF, YOU NUTJOB!
WE'RE TRYING TO WORK A DEAL!
JOHNNY!
WE JUST WANT YA TO HELP WITH SENDIN' THESE ALIENS PACKIN'!
FAH!
ZZZKK
AAAHHH!
UNLESS ALL OF HUMANITY SUDDENLY FINDS THE TIME AND DISCIPLINE TO STUDY THE OCCULT ARTS AS I HAVE, THEY WILL ALL SUCCUMB!

WE HAVE SOMETHING THAT MIGHT WORK, IF YOU CAN KEEP YOUR HANDS OF DEATH DOWN FOR A SEC.
thwip
thwip
IF DOOM CANNOT STOP IT, THEN YOUR CHANCES ARE LAUGHABLE.
IF YOU EVER LAUGH, LET ME KNOW SO I CAN HIDE UNDERGROUND.
AND IT'S NOT OUR SOLUTION...
...IT'S EQUIPMENT FROM THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY THAT'S SUPPOSED TO STOP THINGS LIKE THIS.
BUT EVEN REED COULDN'T FIGURE IT OUT. HE'S STILL WORKING ON IT.
Richards... Can't figure it out?

Soon...
ELEGANTLY SIMPLE DESIGN. PROTON BURSTS HERE PROJECT WAVELENGTHS HERE THAT RENDER D.N.A. INVIOLABLE FOR A PERIOD.
I KNEW THAT. I JUST WANTED TO SEE IF DOOM KNEW THAT.
THIS LAB GIVES ME THE CREEPS.
WHY? BECAUSE EVERYTHING IN HERE IS DESIGNED TO DESTROY US?
ONCE I'VE DUPLICATED THIS DEVICE ON A LARGER SCALE, I CAN BOUNCE SEVERAL BURSTS OFF MY SATELLITE ARRAY.
THE ORIGINAL IS IN THIS GUN CASING. IF YOU CAN THWART THE ALIEN MACHINE WITH IT LOCALLY, I MAY BE ABLE TO SAFEGUARD AS MUCH AS HALF OF EARTH'S POPULATION.
HALF IS BETTER THAN NONE.
TH--THA-- Whew. THANKS, DOOM.
I HAVE EXTENDED NO FAVORS.
THIS WORLD'S DESTINY IS NOT TO FOLLOW VIRAL USURPERS FROM THE STARS...
"...BUT TO BE LED BY THE HAND OF DOOM!"
MAN, IT'S GOOD TO BE OUT OF THERE.
YEAH, THAT PLACE WAS MAKING ME WOOZY. Ugh.
THIS'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER-- DOOM'S SATELLITE IS ABOUT TO LAUNCH!

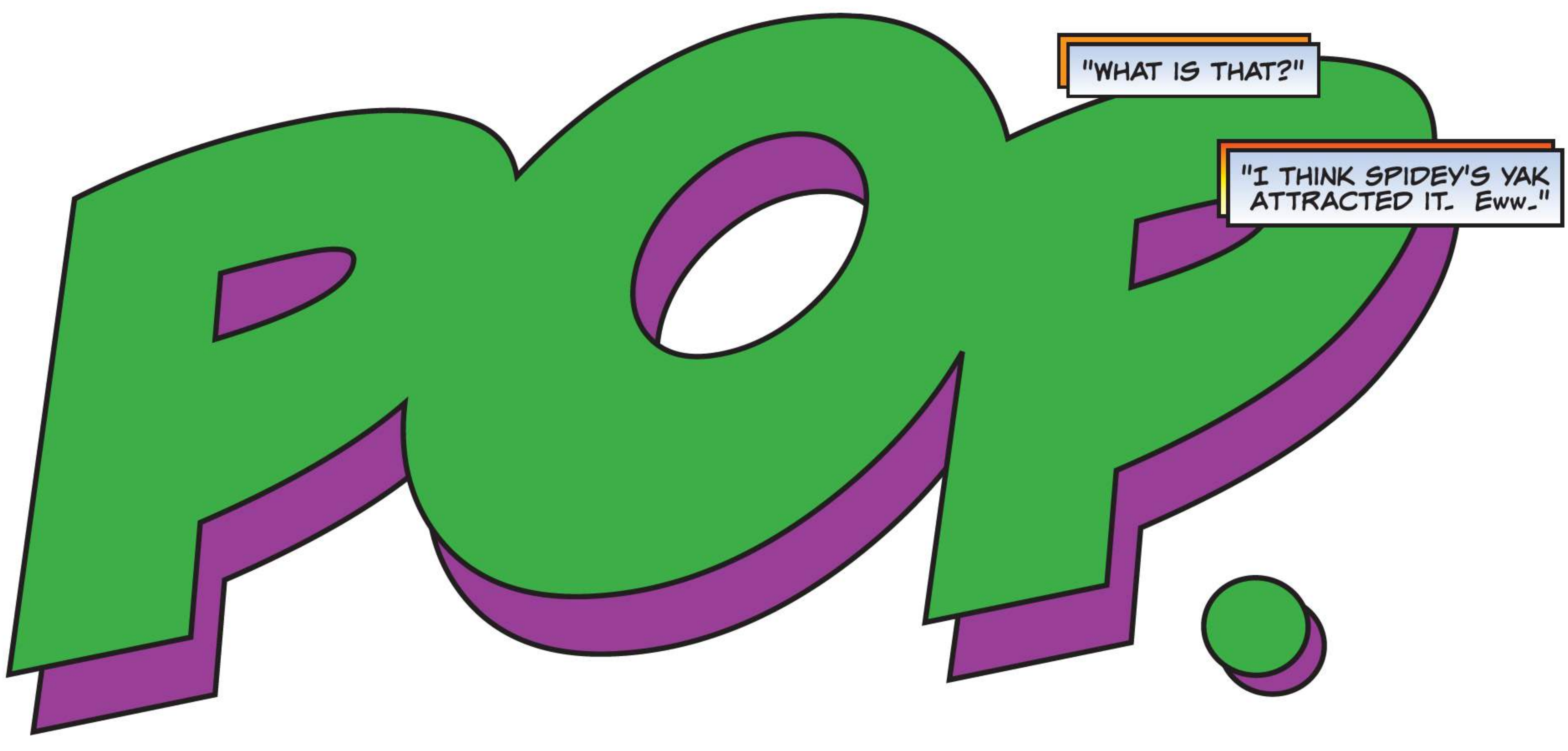
RICHARDS, REED.
ANTHROPOLOGICAL LOG OF THE H'MOJEN.
I'VE BEEN TO SIX DIFFERENT PLANETS, REPRESENTING THE LAST THOUSAND YEARS OF H'MOJEN COLONIZATION. THE ENGINES AND HULL OF MY SHIP WILL BE SPENT SOON.
EVEN THE MOST ALIEN RACES EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR EARTH. HOWEVER, THE DATA THEY HAD TO SHARE WAS LARGELY UNHELPFUL. IN MANY CASES PEOPLE TRIED TO PURGE ALL HISTORY OF THEIR PERIOD OF OCCUPATION.
NO WORLD COULD SUCCESSFULLY REPEL THE MERGE. THE ONLY ONE THAT DID, DID SO AT THE EXPENSE OF THEIR OWN PLANET.
THE PROCESS IS SO SPECIALIZED THAT ANY OTHER ATTEMPTS TO SEPARATE THE HOST RESULTS IN THE DEATHS OF BOTH ENTITIES.
OF COURSE THERE IS ONE PERSON WHO CAN SUCCESSFULLY DO IT: THE IMPERATOR. I LEARNED SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT HIS BACKGROUND AND WHY HE FILLS THIS ROLE.
I HAD HOPED TO COME BACK WITH HARD DATA RATHER THAN PRIVATE DETECTIVE-STYLE INTEL, BUT I'LL TAKE WHAT I CAN GET. NOW IT'S TIME TO RETURN TO EARTH, BUT WHAT WILL BE WAITING FOR ME?

EVEN IN THE VOID OF DEEP SPACE, I'VE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE COMFORT THAT OUR WORLD IS IN THE HANDS OF MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS--THE MOST CAPABLE PEOPLE I KNOW. IF ANY PLANET HAS EVER HAD A CHANCE OF STOPPING THE H'MOJEN, IT'S **EARTH.**
<LEAVE OUR LAND!>
<GO BACK TO SPACE!>
<RUN! THE SILVER IS COMING!>
I AM MERELY DOING MY JOB.
YOU HAVE MY ASSURANCE THAT THE PROCESS IS--
--PAINLESS...?
IMPOSSIBLE! NOTHING CAN REJECT THE MERGE!
GET READY TA LIVE WITH REJECTION, PAL.
AND NOW THE REST OF THE PLANET IS GOING TO BE ALIEN-PROOF.
SPIDER-MAN, ARE YOU OKAY?
HU-- HUU--
HHHHUURRRK!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IS AT STAKE!

DEFENSE PROTOCOL M-11!
Uh-oh, GET READY!
FWASH
DUDE, YOU'RE MISSING BY A MILE!
HEY, SPIDEY GET OVER HERE! SOMETHING'S ABOUT TO GO DOWN!
I THINK SOMETHING'S ALREADY GONE DOWN, BEN...
...AND IT'S COME BACK UP.

4
RINGO!
KESEL
'07

CHAPTER 4



WORLD COUNCIL! THE MERGE HAS BEEN IMPEDED. I'VE IMPLEMENTED DEFENSES AND REQUEST MORE BACKUP FORCES!
R'HOJER THAT, IMPERATOR 3.
S.H.I.E.L.D.-H'ZOR UNIT FROM CAIRO BASE IS ON THE WAY!
HEY, BUD, YOU OKAY?
FEEL... LOT... BETTER.
THE HECK IS THAT...?
--ZSZWREZZZ-- SUSAN....
WAIT, I'M GETTING A MESSAGE--
SUSAN... RRRZZZ-FOUR SECONDS... SHIELD EVERYON-- ZZRRZZ
IT'S REED!
EVERYONE, GET NEAR ME!

TOUCH-DOWN!
KAH!!
UNGH!

DIDN'T I TEACH YA NOTHIN' ABOUT HOW TO LAND A SHIP? LIKE, NOT ON YER TEAM?
SORRY, BEN, BUT ON FINAL APPROACH, AN IDEA STRUCK ME.
I READ YOUR SIGNALS AND SAW THAT YOU WERE NEAR THE IMPERATOR.
AND IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT BREAKING OUT OF HYPERSPACE, EXTREMELY CLOSE IN, WOULD DISRUPT OTHER TIME/SPACE TECHNOLOGY...
...LIKE, SAY, A CHRONAL DISPLACEMENT FIELD.
tap tap
WELL, WELL, WELL. LOOKEE WHAT TIME IT IS.

BOOM
Oh, THAT FELT GOOD.
WELCOME BACK.
DID YOU MAKE ANY PROGRESS?
Uh...WE LOST HALF THE PLANET, BUT THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE?
LOOKING GOOD.
THAT'S BETTER THAN ANY OTHER WORLDS HAVE DONE.
ONLY ONE PLANET HAS SUCCESSFULLY AVOIDED COLONIZATION...
...THE IMPERATOR'S.
WHERE IS THAT BUM ANYWAY? I MUST BE HITTIN' HARDER THESE DAYS.

I HAVE NOT LEFT, AND I WILL COMPLETE MY MISSION.
EVEN IF I HAVE TO USE ALL THE GENETIC POTENTIAL OF THIS WORLD TO DO IT!
GREAT.
BRING 'EM ON! WE'LL SHOW 'EM THE SAME WAY WE DID YER BUGS!
WAY TO SHOW HIM, BEN!
=ENNGH= SHUT UP!

WOW, HE MUST HAVE A THICK HIDE!
YEAH, HE MAKES THE RHINO I'M USED TO LOOK ANEMIC.
HEY! WHAT A SUCKER SHOT!
FLOOOSH
YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THAT COMING, FROM WATCHING NATURE SHOWS WITH THE KIDS.
I DON'T REMEMBER THEM EXTINGUISHING FIERY DUDES WITH LOOGIES!
HEY, HANDSOME, NOW IT'S GRIMM'S TURN!

WHUMP
OOFH!
NO, IT'S HIS TURN, BEN.
BUT I'LL HAVE HIM READY FOR YOU WHEN YOU GET BACK.
OKAY, THAT WAS SMUG, SORRY!
LET HIM GO!
Oh.
THANKS, SUE.
WHRREENK!

CONCENTRATE ON GETTING THE IMPERATOR! HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN RESTORE THE MERGED PEOPLE TO NORMAL!
I'M DRY AGAIN.
SO I GUESS, YOU DON'T WANT ANY NOW THAT YOUR LITTLE *TIME FIELD* IS GONE!
I AM NOT A WARRIOR! I AM A GENETIC TECHNICIAN!
I SWEAR, IF I CAN STAY IN THIS FIGHT FOR TEN SECONDS--
HEY! THE LI'L GREEN GUY IS OKAY! GOOD TO SEE YA, IMPY!
Uh...
IMPY...?

HGRRRAGGH
HOW LONG CAN YOUR FIELD HOLD?
NOT AS LONG AS YOU'D PROBABLY LIKE.
THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN! I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU'RE BACK, BUT YOU'RE JUST IN TIME!
WAIT, THERE'S ONE OF HIM OVER HERE, TOO...
HRRARRH?
CHOMP
KRUNCH

WE ARE THE BODY CONGLOMERATE OF THE P'OPPUP'IAN RACE.
THIS IMPERATOR NEARLY ANNIHILATED OUR PRIME CARRIER, AND WITH IT, OUR ENTIRE SPECIES.
WE HAVE HAD TO REBUILD OURSELVES FROM A SINGLE CELL INSIDE THE BODY OF THE ARACHNID MAN.
WE HAVE RELEASED OUR FULL GENETIC POTENTIAL. WE WILL NO LONGER RISK EXTINCTION.

THAT WAS IN YOU ALL THIS TIME?
THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN WAS INCINERATED BUT---
I---I MUST HAVE---BREATHED IN WHAT WAS LEFT!
THIS IS THE ONE WHO COMPROMISED OUR CELLULAR INTEGRITY.
I WAS JUST DOING--
MY JOBBBBB B--
AAAAGH H!
UH. WERE YOU SURE HE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD---
PRETTY SURE.

BACK IT UP, IT'S COMING OUT!
NO MORE WILL WE
CONTAIN OURSELVES WITHIN ONE
CARRIER. WE WILL NOW
MANIFEST EACH INDIVIDUAL OF
OUR ENTIRE RACE.
NOW ANOTHER ALIEN RACE IS GOING TO POPULATE EARTH?
JUST WHEN WE WERE GAININ' SOME GROUND...
HOW COULD THIS GET ANY WORSE?
FUNNY YOU SHOULD ASK, STORM.

S.H.I.E.L.D. HELICARRIER NINE ENGAGING HOSTILE ALIEN LIFE-FORM!
CHOOM
CHOOM
CHOOM
CHOOM
INCOMING!
SUE!
I'M ON IT!
AH. THE H'MOJEN PARASITES.
BEN, I THINK THE IMPERATOR IS STILL ALIVE!

WHOOPEE! NOW WHEN THE WALKIN' POPULATION DECIDES TO FINISH HIM, WE'LL GO DOWN TOO!
ONLY HE CAN SUCCESSFULLY SEPARATE THE SPECIES, AS HE DOES WHENEVER THE H'MOJEN MOVE TO ANOTHER WORLD. HE'S DONE THIS FOR A THOUSAND YEARS.
"THE H'MOJEN WERE GOING TO COLONIZE HIS PLANET, WHEN THIS ALIEN--ILGYCH, OFFERED ANOTHER WORLD THAT SUITED THEIR AGENDA JUST AS WELL. THE PREVIOUS IMPERATOR AGREED TO CHANGE THE PLAN IF ILGYCH WOULD TAKE OVER HIS POSITION.
"THE ONLY WAY AN IMPERATOR CAN LEAVE HIS JOB IS IF HE FINDS ANOTHER BEING BETTER-SUITED TO THE TASK. AND IT'S THE ONLY WAY ILGYCH COULD KEEP THE H'MOJEN AWAY FROM HIS DESIRABLE WORLD. THE EQUIPMENT IS ALWAYS SET TO RETURN TO HIS PLANET AND BEGIN THE MERGE IF HE DOESN'T COLONIZE ON SCHEDULE."
SO HE'S LIKE THE SILVER SURFER WITHOUT THE SWEET BOARD AND POWER COSMIC.
EXCEPT HE DOES GET TO RETURN TO HIS HOME-WORLD BETWEEN COLONIZATIONS.
I DOUBT HE WANTS TO KEEP WORKING FOR THE H'MOJEN FOR ALL ETERNITY.
TRUE.
HE'S COMING TO!
I CAN NEVER LEAVE MY STATION. THEIR SYSTEMS ARE TOO WELL ESTABLISHED. AND THEY WILL NEVER STAY IN ONE PLACE, THEIR BIOLOGY WILL NOT ALLOW IT.

YOUR WORK MAY BE AT AN END AFTER ALL, ILGYCH.
THE INHABITANTS OF EARTH HAVE NOT WRONGED US, AND WILL BE SPARED.
THEY SHALL BE DIVIDED FROM THE H'MOJEN.
HEY, LOOK, THE IMPOSSIBLES CAN SEPARATE THEM!
BUT THIS IS NOT THEIR ORIGINAL ENVIRONMENT. AS YOU SEE, TO SEPARATE THEM LIKE THIS...
...IS TO KILL THEM.

I WANT OUR PEOPLE FREE, BUT NOT LIKE THIS!
RIGHT, THE H'MOJEN TRIED TO AVOID FATALITIES--
HEY, NO ONE WANTS THAT, BUT WHAT'S OUR CHOICE?
YOU HAVE TO BEGIN THE PLANETARY EXODUS NOW!
YOUR DUTY IS TO KEEP THE H'MOJEN RACE THRIVING, AND NONE OF US CAN STOP THE POPPUPIAN RACE!
THERE...IS NO APPROVED PLANET TO PROCEED TO. THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE OPEN NOW IS...
...MY WORLD.
THEM'S THE BREAKS, PAL. NOW GO FIRE UP THAT WHIFFLE-BALL.
INITIATING FULL-VITAESTREAM RECALL,
"REMOTE UNITS ARE ASSIMILATING THE POPULACE. RETRIEVAL TAKES MUCH LESS TIME THAN PLACEMENT."

THE H'MOJEN RETREAT.
THREAT LEVELS TO THE CONGLOMERATE ARE DECREASING AT FACTOR FOUR.
NOW WE MAY ASSERT INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUSNESS.
THIS WILL GREATLY IMPROVE SELF-PRESERVATION.
EXCUSE ME, BUT HOW MANY OF YOU...WILL THERE BE?
WE HAVE THE CAPACITY FOR NINE BILLION UNIQUE BEINGS.
WAIT! I'M NOT SURE OUR PLANET CAN SUSTAIN THAT, ALONG WITH OUR POPULATION!
HARDLY OUR PROBLEM.
THEY'RE JUST AS SNOTTY AS IMPY WAS WHEN WE FIRST MET 'IM.
NOW THEY DECIDE TO PUT DOWN ROOTS!
IT AIN'T OVER 'TIL IT'S OVER!

HEY! CAN YOUR MACHINES STORE A SPECIES OTHER THAN THE H'MOJEN?
LIKE, SAY--- THEM?
YES. IT HAS NEVER BEEN DONE, THOUGH. I WOULD NEED TO RECALIBRATE IT WITH A SAMPLE OF D.N.A.
HERE'S SOME THAT WAS STUCK TO BEN!
HEY, TELL ME WHEN I GOT ALIEN ON ME!
YES...IF I CONTAIN THE POPPUPIANS, THE H'MOJEN COULD RESUME COLONIZATION.
YOU'RE A REAL BINARY KINDA GUY, huh?
I'VE GOT ANOTHER OPTION, THAT I THINK WILL WORK FOR EVERYONE.
SINCE THEY ARE CLOSE, THIS CAN PROCEED QUICKLY.
BUT THEY MUST NOT REALIZE WHAT I AM DOING OR--
SAY NO MORE, THE KING OF DISTRACTION IS ON THE WAY!

ALL EYES ON ME!
YOU ARE GETTING SLEEE-PY...
AWAY, NUISANCE.
YOUR PRIMITIVE ANTICS WILL NOT DETER US.
Oh, I'M BRIGHTER THAN YOU THINK.
YAAAAAHHHH!
FOOM
klik
NOooooooooooooo

ENTRY 10-Z ON THE H'MOJEN ATTEMPTED COLONIZATION OF EARTH, REED RICHARDS.
I ADMIT, I'M ENVIOUS THAT SPIDER-MAN REASONED THIS OUT BEFORE ME. BUT AS HE SAID, HE'S MORE OF A "BIOLOGY GUY" WHILE I'M MORE A "PHYSICS GUY."
AT LEAST I DID KNOW OF AN UNINHABITED PLANET TO USE, ONE OF SEVERAL I DISCOVERED WHEN SEARCHING FOR OPTIONS FOR GALACTUS TO CONSUME RATHER THAN EARTH.
STILL, AN INSPIRED MOVE. COMBINE THE MOST ADAPTABLE YET DIRECTIONLESS SPECIES IN THE GALAXY WITH THE GROWTH-DRIVEN ONE UNABLE TO CHANGE ON THEIR OWN.
BOTH RACES SEEM TO HAVE FOUND COMPLETION IN THIS, THE FINAL GREAT MERGE.
AND THE IMPERATOR HAS BEEN RETIRED.
THE BUG IS GONNA BE FULL OF HIMSELF WHEN HE HEARS HOW WELL HIS IDEA WORKED OUT.
YEAH, BUT NO WAY AM I TELLING HIM ABOUT THAT.
I DON'T THINK HE CARES ABOUT THE EGO BOOST ANYWAY, GUYS...

"...I THINK HE WAS READY TO GET BACK TO WHAT HE WAS FIGHTING FOR."
I CAN ONLY BARELY REMEMBER BEING SILVER--ISN'T THAT WEIRD?
Kak kak kak kak...
NO, THAT'S NORMAL. THE WAY IT SHOULD BE.
THOUGH I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT AUNT MAY.
WHY?
kak kak kak...
HER HAIR IS STILL SILVER.
Oh, YOU...
HU-KAK!
POP
NEVER THE END!

SERIES OUTLINE by JEFF PARKER

Okay guys, here's a more involved spiel of the story. I don't go into character interaction with the heroes here, because I don't usually decide that at the plot stage. They just start behaving the way I think they would once I'm into the page-to-page writing. You can pretty much scan through any of my FF writing on the Adventures books to get an idea of how I handle them. And even in the Marvel Adventures Spider-Man #4 where I have Spidey and The Torch fight the gangsta-talkin' Goom!

JP

Fantastic Four and Spider-Man: TERRITORY (or something like that)

An alien race from another arm of the galaxy has set their sights on Earth, and they have a 100% success rate at taking over worlds. They are essentially Gestalt-chasers, who move their whole civilization periodically to whatever is considered the most crucial world in a sector of space. Earth is the perfect new homeworld; while not as powerful as say the Skrull, Kree or Shi'ar empires, it's managed to play pivotal roles in all of their outcomes. This race has evolved to graft themselves onto their new host species until the chosen planet is no longer "the place to be." Like a large corporation taking over a small unique business, they don't realize that their occupation waters down what is special about their new home. Earth starts turning into a version of whatever their original world was, growing over with odd flora, and everyone begins to turn the same color with the same alien features. I'm thinking their original form is like an anemone or odd sea life, and as humanoids they still have lots of tendril growths around their faces, but we can work that out with all the other designs this story calls for.

Rough Summary of #1-4

The beginning has Spider-Man seeing an ominous figure flying in on a surfboard at night. Upon closer inspection, it's The Impossible Man horsing around in the form of the Silver Surfer. He's put out at first because there's a park where he was expecting the original Baxter Building, and once he sees Spidey he's so entertained by this weird hero that he bedevils him for a bit. Then another object from space lands and Imp remembers why he came in the first place (and appropriately as a harbinger of doom).They race over there (Imp forms himself into a Spider-Plane or some wacky merchandise-style vehicle). The being they've sent ahead is a creature that paves the way for them. Years ago he sent drone ships to collect samples from humans (it's what all that probing was about!). We can establish an old abductee early, talking to one of the villains who will later be amped up.

The Advance Force character begins setting up his machine in Central Park that will begin the invasion/grafting and Spidey tries futilely to stop it. Impy is mad that his new friend has been attacked and tries to take down the creature with his formidable abilities, but it destroys him, horribly. He keeps morphing into different things that keep also falling apart (like T2) and finally he's vaporized. In a subtle fashion, Spidey breathes in some of the green vapor left behind. He drags himself to the current Baxter Building and collapses as the Fantastic Four have just returned. Reed can't believe that anything could destroy Imp, the most adaptable creature ever. He retains the genetic info of his whole race in his DNA code and can ultimately rebuild all of Poppup by himself, though he hasn't done so since Galactus ate his homeworld (with their complete acceptance, according to Marvel documentarians).

Spidey and the Four won't be affected by the joining because their physiologies have been altered enough by their past transformations.

The FF try to stop the Advance being to no avail. He has a two-second chronal distortion field around his body and equipment that sets back any attack briefly in time and space. The Advance being is very workmanlike and matter of fact about what he does — it's his job. He doesn't mind telling Reed about it because he's confident they can't stop him. He's not malicious, which is

why he recruits human villains later to deal with the heroes. When the Aliens themselves start showing up, they also don't act like typical villains. They generally act like they're doing us all a huge favor by combining and homogenizing our species.

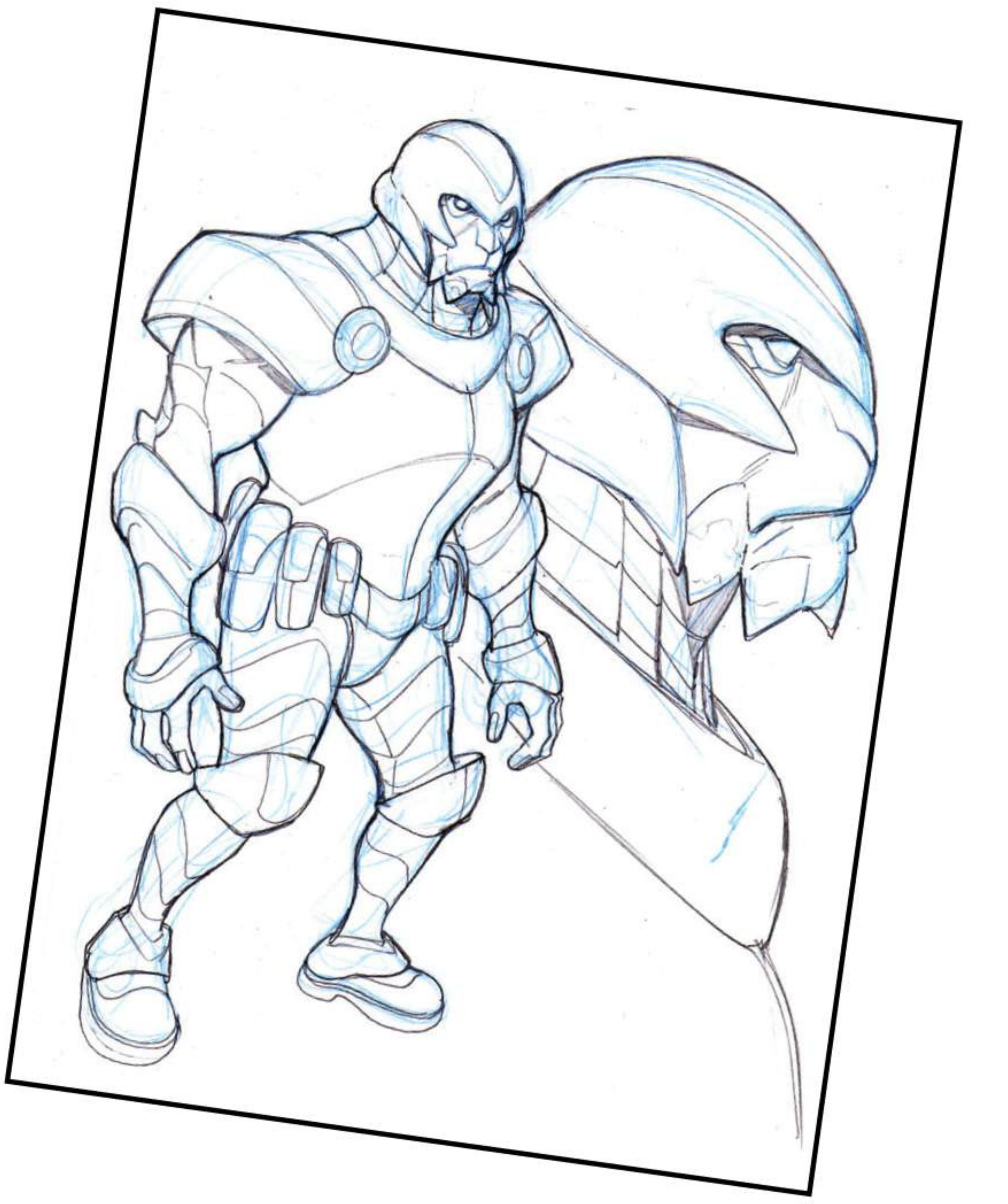
Meanwhile, in Spidey's body, The Impossible Man slowly starts coming back, working himself up to molecular complexity from almost nothing. The FF find a way to halt the invasion (though much of the northern hemisphere is affected already), and the Advance Man then finds their "natural predators" which he improves upon so he can get back to work. Then there's plenty of battle and we can jump around to other locales like the desert where the heroes are destroying relay equipment. While the villains will be dealt with, they're going to be left in their new forms so they can plague Marveldom in style after our series. It might be fun to have some of the FF be briefly affected by the same process, so you have a moment where Sue can turn the whole planet invisible or something huge like that.

We often cut around the world to see how the invasion is changing everyone, especially when we need time to pass between scenes. Examples: Namor is battling his transformed subjects since his hybrid biology keeps him from changing. Ditto with all X-Men, who find themselves — what a change — hunted and battled by the majority species.

Finally the Impossible Man has worked his way back up to complexity and exits Spidey's body in as gross a fashion as we can manage. He's not so wacky and mischievous now, he's plenty mad because he was almost really destroyed. He starts going off on the aliens by forming into incredible monsters and weaponry, and Spider-Man is the one who realizes the key to getting rid of the aliens — appropriate, because he's more the biology nerd than Reed, a physics nerd mostly. The aliens have a biological imperative to keep changing with host species and their constant invasive evolution is going to get them killed, as it almost does here. Similarly, Impossible Man's people are the most adaptable species in the universe, but since they can be anything, they have no identity or purpose as a people. Hence that none of them have names and Impy is always looking for distractions to occupy his flighty nature. Combining the two will create one complete species, and the FF (thanks to having to deter Galactus all the time) have a list of habitable planets without a similarly complex race where they could put this new civilization. The heroes will have to convince or manipulate the Advance Guy into helping this happen.

The question I was going to raise is in the way this goes down at the end. It seems unlikely that the Poppupians and Invading Aliens would both go along with the solution, so it would have to be decided how much our heroes want to force this to happen — mainly for Imp's sake. So it could be handled like a tough call they have to make as they create the new race. I'll probably have an epilogue where a cat or dog that was around in the first book then hacks up another Impossible Man so he still exists in classic form, a one-man plague that never ends.

JP



IMPERATOR DESIGN
by **MIKE WIERINGO**

ISSUE #4, PAGE 5 by MIKE WIERINGO

ISSUE #4, PAGE 17 by MIKE WIERINGO

COVER #3 by MIKE WIERINGO

COVER #4 by MIKE WIERINGO

TWO GREAT TASTES THAT TASTE GREAT TOGETHER!

The world's greatest super hero and the world's greatest super team collide! After a visit by the Impossible Man, your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man is faced with a dangerous new alien threat for which he has only one recourse: call in the Fantastic Four. Separately, Spidey and the FF are the foundation of the Marvel Universe. Together, they just may save it!

Collecting *Spider-Man/Fantastic Four #1-4*, written by **JEFF PARKER** (*Agents of Atlas*) and illustrated by **MIKE WIERINGO** (*Fantastic Four*).